

# JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

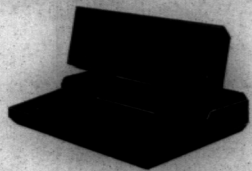
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from the camp manager's position.



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Americans love tales of action and adventure. From the often-inaccurate but widely followed stories of cowboys and Indians to modern space adventures, we crave the thrill provided by action/adventure sagas that take us away from our mundane daily chores and responsibilities.

We love Arnold Schwarzenegger and Robocop. Whatever the plot of a John Wayne movie — cowboy, oil well firefighter, or private detective — we knew we were in for a treat.

There is the three-movie series of Indiana Jones features, for example, in which a mild-mannered archaeology professor turns into an indomitable warrior for Truth, Justice, and the American Way.

He turns out to be a little rougher around the edges than we generally prefer our champions, but we'll overlook those flaws as long as he's dodging bullets and overcoming all manner of natural and man-made obstacles to keep the Ark of the Covenant out of Nazi hands.

That's the way we are. It may be mostly well-timed Hollywood special effects and decent story telling, but we still consume it at considerable expense in ever-increasing quantities.

Perhaps it's time — past time, actually — to turn our attention to real-life gallantry, to the actual living-and-breathing people who aren't faking it when they risk everything for the cause.

There are people like that among us. They are called missionaries.

Missionaries may not be searching for the lost Ark, but they are searching for lost souls. They may not be dodging Nazi bullets, but some of them are dodging marauders' bullets.

Their stories of real-life action and adventure are the stuff of which best-selling movies are made. It's too bad the world doesn't see it that way.

In 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell, a controversial magazine article declared "the end of history." Not the apocalypse — just the end of the great historical-ideological conflicts that have shaped human events since the American and French Revolutions.

Communism, dictatorships, and centralized control are dead or dying, contended the article's author. Democracy and free markets have conquered much of the globe and soon will win the rest.

End of story and of history, as we have known it.

Even if the theory had proved true in global politics and economics — and it hasn't, at least not yet — it ignores the deepest conflict and yearning of human history. Liberty, dignity and prosperity are wonderful things, but they aren't enough.

English poet William Wordsworth put it this way: "The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers; Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!"

"Easy for a free man with a full belly to say," a starving slave might respond. Spiritual striving is a luxury of the rich;

## Real-life heroes

At this special time of year when we emphasize the greatest single missions offering in Christendom, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, it is fitting to also recognize those brave men and women who literally risk everything to accomplish the task of helping to bring the world to Jesus.

By God's grace, most of them return to us safe and sound after serving in some of the most spiritually-hostile places on the planet. Most of them return, but not all.

There have been many who were forced to offer the ultimate sacrifice for their loyalty to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and it's exceedingly easy for us to think of them as members of some distant and honorable generation, far removed from us as we enter a new millennium.

Nothing could be farther from the truth, however. There are missionaries today who continue to put their everything on the line for the cause of Christ.

Some missionaries today are ministering in places where, if their true purpose were known, they would be at risk of losing their lives or at the least being forced to flee under cover of darkness. Some missionaries must live in heavily-guarded compounds, and even that is often not enough to protect them from robbers and murderers.

### No BR Dec. 28

Due to postal regulations, the Baptist Record will not be published on December 28. The next issue will be published January 4. All news items and letters received by December 24 will be published by December 28. We wish you and your family a joyous observance of the birth of our Savior.



The work of some missionaries is so fraught with danger that their names and places of service cannot even be announced at their commissioning service or listed on prayer calendars.

They know that the next missionary tragedy could befall them or their family members, yet they persevere in the work God has called them to do.

Each one of them deserves our unceasing prayer support and unfailing financial support. They deserve our support in every way we can muster.

In an era when we fill movie theaters in a frantic search for modern heroes, missionaries are people to which we can pin our hopes and dreams of finally fulfilling our Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) — no matter the obstacles.

That is, after all, the highest heroism there can possibly be.

## GUEST OPINION:



### Not by bread alone

By Erich Bridges  
International Mission Board  
of the Southern Baptist Convention

most people struggle for survival and crave material things, not inner peace.

Why, then, did a poor carpenter, 40-days hungry in the desert, remind the devil, "... Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4)?

Those words are as true now as they were in Jesus' day. The wealth, power, and gods of Rome didn't satisfy the millions of souls who lived under the Roman Empire's mighty thumb.

More than 99%

of Turkey's 65 million people are Muslim, but 70% of them now live in sprawling urban centers. Seventy percent are under age 35. Their real "majority religion,"

says one observer, is secularism and materialism.

No wonder the affluent, sophisticated young friends of H a l e Gencel, a 29-year-old believer in Istanbul, sense something in her that they lack.

"They're

looking for truth and can't find it, but they see the peace in here," she says, tapping her heart. "It's Jesus."

Likewise, the nearly 80 million Bengali Hindus of India and Bangladesh are experiencing a crisis of the soul that mirrors the physical poverty so many of them still suffer.

Only a spiritual revolution can transform the social corruption that allows crooked "godfathers" to control much of daily life in Bengali society.

"Once you are bought by a godfather, you belong to him," says a Bengali Christian. A Hindu observer agrees: "The demand of the godfather is much more than the demand of God. That has happened in our society, in all the world. That is why there is so much violence, so much crime, so much sin, because no one thinks of God."

Yet faithful Hindus yearn for release from the material world. They eagerly look, in the words of the great Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore, for the "new deliverer" who seems to be "just off the stage, like an imminent star of morning."

That deliverer is Jesus Christ. His light will dawn over the Turks, the Bengalis — and every people on the earth.

**Lottie Moon Christmas  
Offering for International  
Missions  
Offering Goal: \$115,000,000**



# Tract helps tackle basic training with Christ

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — The path scales Heartbreak Hill, teeters near the trail to the brig and traverses torturous training areas, then approaches the gas chamber, face to face with the moment of decision.

Common civilians would be completely ignorant of these scenes, but these locales resonate instantaneously with any Army soldier who has braved the travails of basic training at Fort Knox.

Southern Seminary student Dan Thompson hopes these paths — drawn on the "Hell or Hope" gospel tract — will also serve to show soldiers the way to finish basic training with Christ.

"God just put a serious burden on my heart to see these [soldiers] come to know Christ," said Thompson, a doctor of education student from DeLand, Fla.

Several years ago, Thompson, then a master of divinity student, received God's direction to develop a tract that would tell the gospel to grunts in a way they could easily grasp.

"We really tried to use a play on words, a play on what they're going through," said Thompson, a former Naval Reserve chaplain. "We tried to contextualize it."

So, for example, the gas chamber — a torturous training exercise involving eye-burning tear gas — is used to represent hell.

"At that point [on the tract] we have a character, a nonbeliever, saying, 'Man, that was hell.' And the Christian is saying, 'Not even close,' trying to demonstrate that this is serious business," Thompson said.

Now, after many months of labor, input from students and professors, and lots of guidance from God, Thompson is ready to employ his production in

winning the legions of lost souls who enlist each year in America's armed forces.

"When they receive that hope, they are just changed."

"When you see these men —

directing soldiers to the Scriptures. The tract takes the new convert through seven chapters of the Gospel of John in seven days.

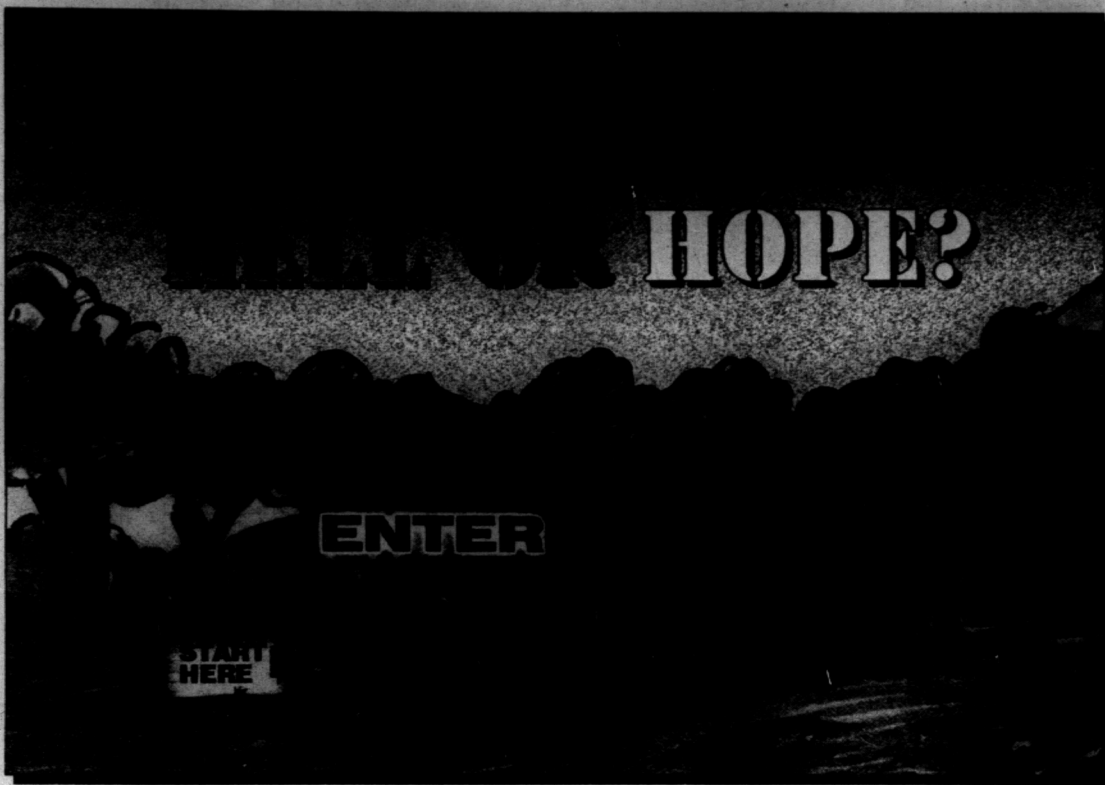
"I took several lessons that I wanted them to learn — going to church, how to read the Bible, all these principles that are necessary for a young believer," Thompson said. "Also I wanted to marry that with certain doctrines of the church and blend it all together."

Of course, Thompson realizes that by no means does the tract solve all the problems. The new believer still needs to have a mentoring relationship and a support system.

To meet this need, Thompson developed an ID card to accompany the tract.

The card includes a toll-free phone number of a Christian organization that can counsel soldiers 24 hours a day.

As the card and tract developed, Thompson realized they



Originally, Thompson sought to develop the tract just to reach basic trainees attending Operation Appreciation (OA) — a weekly evangelistic ministry to soldiers at Fort Knox.

Through OA, basic trainees are bused to a local Louisville church where volunteers present the gospel to the soldiers while they enjoy a break from yelling drill sergeants and exhausting drudgery.

After a gospel presentation, OA volunteers generally have no more than 30 minutes to counsel soldiers who come forward in response to the gospel call. In view of these time constraints, Thompson aimed to create a tool to facilitate a fast and accurate gospel explanation. Thompson's tract accomplishes that goal in a language to which soldiers can relate.

"These men are just crying out for some type of hope, something that they can just hold onto — truth, unadulterated truth," Thompson said.

grown men — weeping for the Lord, recognizing their pain and recognizing their depravity, being able to deliver such a powerful message excites you even more."

Thompson also wants the tract to be more than a mere evangelistic tool. When completely unfolded, one side of the pamphlet presents the gospel while the other shepherds the soldier through seven days of devotional material.

"From the very beginning, I really felt the burden to bridge the gap between evangelism and discipleship with the Army soldiers from Fort Knox," Thompson said. "With Operation Appreciation we would bring them in, and we would have a great opportunity to share the gospel with them."

"Yet there was very little follow-up because of the time frame that we were given to work with these men. Oftentimes, I felt like we were turning them out into the middle of the woods and telling them to survive."

The back of "Hell or Hope" offers survival instructions by

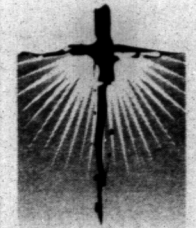
could even be used to reach others soldiers besides those who come to Operation Appreciation.

Now, Thompson believes the tract can be adapted to touch military personnel far beyond the gates of Fort Knox.

The North American Mission Board, the American Tract Society, and the Navigators have all expressed interest in making the tract available to chaplains across the world.

"Now I see that it can even be used in larger contexts," Thompson said.

"It could go global. That's pretty incredible."



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BAPTISTS

THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST  
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## African leader sees hope

IBADAN, Nigeria (BP) — "Hope is the only thing we in Africa can hold on to, hope based on faith in Jesus Christ," said Douglas Waruta, vice president of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and a professor at the University of Kenya. In the featured address at the Nov. 11-15 Assembly of the All Africa Baptist Fellowship (AABF) in Ibadan, Nigeria, Waruta described Africa as "a continent of paradoxes," a confusing continent that is difficult to define and is searching for its own identity. The AABF is one of the six regional bodies of the BWA. "How do you celebrate in a context of misery?" Waruta asked. "How do you celebrate 500 years of exploitation, humiliation, and degradation? How do we celebrate a continent that carries a debt burden that we cannot pay? Do we need celebration or lamentation? The hope is in Christ's suffering, death and in the power of the Resurrection. We have a right as Africans to cry like Jesus on the cross, 'God where are you?' because Jesus Christ hung there and he did not pretend. The cross was one of real suffering and humiliation, the bottom of the bottom of where a human being can go — but in [Christ's] resurrection God announced victory over evil. God has not forsaken us or abandoned us. The God of Jesus Christ is in Africa. He speaks through Christians who have been redeemed and who know what redemption is and are committed to bringing this hope to every corner of this continent of Africa."

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Jeremy Racey, 14-year-old son of Mike and Annette Racey, Southern Baptist missionaries to Chile, wins first place in the high jump event at the Chile national track and field competition. He is the grandson of Walter and Irma Racey and Clyde and Margaret Evans, all of Biloxi.

### 20 years ago

First Church, Wiggins, votes to send \$8,000 to help construct a new educational building at First Church, DeWitt, Michigan, which is pastored by Floyd Hughes, former pastor of Olivet Church, Gulfport. The gift will enable the growing Michigan church to move into the new building debt-free.

### 50 years ago

Blue Mountain College dedicates a Mississippi Historical Commission marker on Highway 15 near the college to signify the Baptist-affiliated school's status as the oldest women's college in the state. College President Lawrence T. Lowery, grandson of the school's founder, presides.

the  
**Unfinished  
Task**  
2000

Dispelling the Darkness

Lottie Moon  
Christmas Offering  
for International  
Missions  
Goal: \$155,000,000



# Study provides fantasy ferry to missions

IRVING, Texas (BP) — Children took a ferryboat ride from Texas to Turkey on a recent Saturday morning as they experienced a participatory missions study.

Vickie Wilson, who wrote this year's International Mission Study (IMS) for children published by Woman's Missionary Union (MWU), was coordinator of the project at Plymouth Park Church, Irving, Texas, held in cooperation with Dallas Association. Her goal was to capture the imagination of children while engaging them in the missions study.

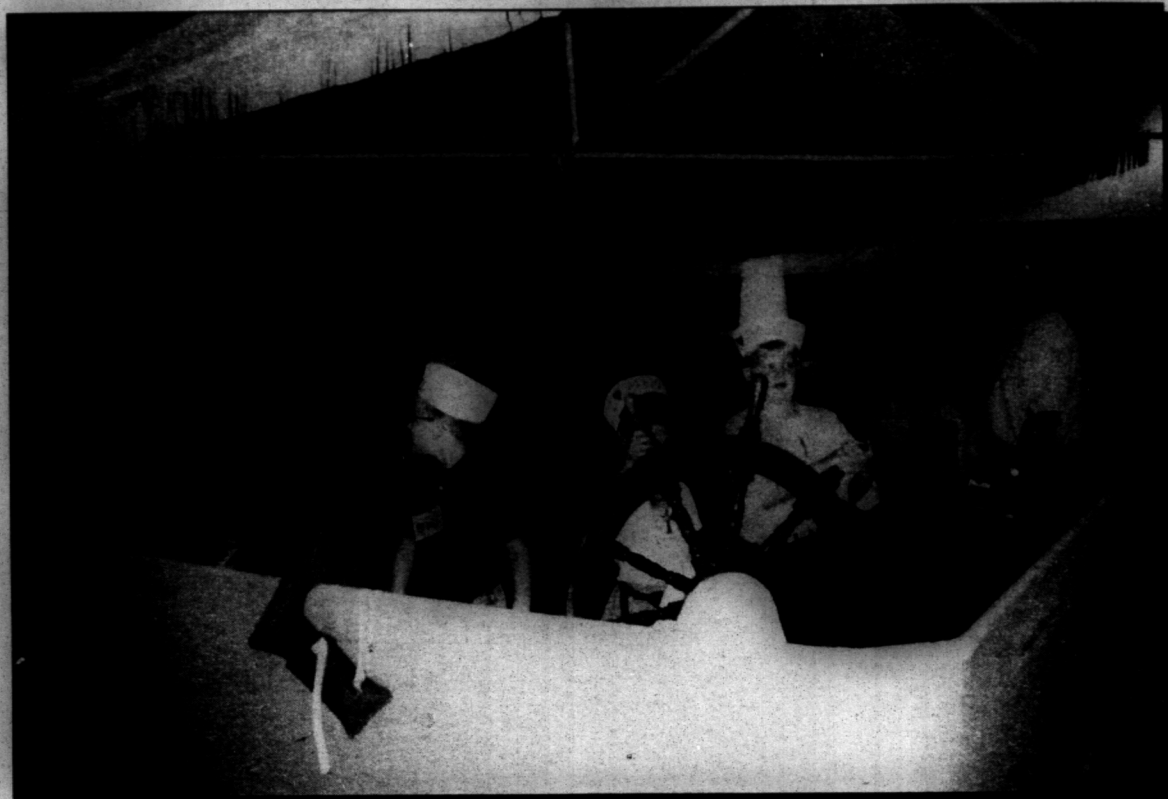
A ferryboat was constructed at one end of the gym. The top of the ferry was made of cloth suspended from the ceiling and draped around a frame. The lower exterior of the ferry also was made of cloth hung around a frame. Blue paper spread on the floor completed the illusion of water.

"It was wonderful just seeing the children's faces as they walked in and saw the ferryboat," Wilson said.

Organizers knew they were competing against other pulls on the lives of the children, and they wanted to make it a morning that would long be stored in their memory banks, she said.

"You have to compete with basketball and soccer and football, but we figured this would be something worthwhile," Wilson said. "We wanted it to be as experiential as possible so that the children would remember it better. They might not remember playing in a soccer game, but they would remember the day they rode in a ferryboat."

About 130 children entered the ferry after giving the conductor their ticket. Then they followed their tour guides to learn more about Turkey in smaller groups. After moving to each of four learning centers, they entered a Turkish market set up in one corner of the gym. In the market,



they could spend the lira they had been given to purchase their lunch.

While the arrangements at Plymouth Park were elaborate, Wilson said any size church could employ the basic ideas of the international missions study for children.

"Any church can do it," she said. "The plans for the leader guide in the book are very specific and are designed so that any church can use them. They might not be as grandiose as what we did, but it can be just as meaningful."

"It's not necessarily the size, but the experiential nature of the things that is important."

The huge ferry Plymouth Park constructed would seat more than 100, but instructions in the manual call for a ferry made up of chairs and ropes. Wilson said the instructions could be used as they are, or as starting places for leaders who want to "think outside of the box." The manual also contains tickets that can be copied and other items to help make the study more hands-on for students.

"Sometimes we tend to put missions studies off to the side, like they're not important, but they are. We just need to find ways to make them real to the kids and let their imaginations take it from there," Wilson said.

## Missionary dies in crash; family injured

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP) — A Southern Baptist missionary was killed and his wife and two children were seriously injured Nov. 27 in a five-vehicle crash on Interstate 35 south of San Antonio, Texas.

Roger A. Berno, 48, an International Mission Board general evangelist in Zacatecas, Mexico, was pronounced dead at the scene by emergency response personnel. His wife, Cynthia, also 48, and their two children, Shaundra and Sean, both 13, were hospitalized in San Antonio with serious injuries.

The family had been visiting relatives following the death of Berno's mother in Dewar, Okla. They were returning to Mexico when the wreck occurred about 4:25 p.m. in a construction zone six miles south of Dilley, Texas. The family's car was crushed against a concrete barricade by a tractor-trailer rig.

A native of Henryetta, Okla., Berno had served as a staff member of Bullard Chapel Church in Tishomingo, Okla.; First Church in Dewar; and Texas Church in Newalla, Okla. He was a graduate of Rose State College in Midwest City, Okla., and Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant.

He and his wife, the former Cynthia Brown of Lenapah, Okla., were appointed as missionaries by the International Mission Board in December 1991.

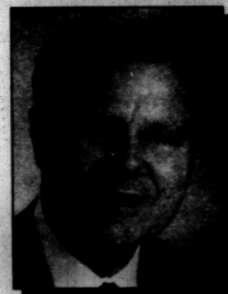
### THE LOST CAT

Almost every day somewhere, in some way, you hear a part of the Christmas story. There are dozens of ways to view God's great act of reaching down to us. Sometimes the events are seen through the telescopic lens of Old Testament prophecy, and at other times God's heavenly invasion is told through the words of the Gospel writers Matthew and Luke.

Seldom do we hear the very heart of the Christmas story — the purpose of Jesus coming — as stated in Luke 19:10, "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." In a sense it may be the shortest and also the most pointed statement of Christmas.

The other day I drove into a neighborhood where everyone had decorated for Christmas. Lights were up and all kinds of sights and sounds of Christmas could be heard. It was typical of so many places across the land — people geared up and celebrating Christmas.

Yet in the midst of all the preparations and decorations, something had happened to one family that superseded everything else. A family had lost their cat. I became aware of it because everywhere I looked there were signs that read, "Lost Cat" followed with some vital information. Someone had put these



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

small banners up on stop-signs, posts, and trees. They were everywhere — "Lost Cat."

Almost without realizing it, I began to look intensely for the cat. As I looked, I thought about what was actually taking place. I first thought about the dilemma. Can you imagine the conversation and the tears as children felt the pain of a lost cat? Lostness is a heartbreaking thing.

As I reflected on the dilemma of that family, I was reminded of the deep feelings that God has over our lostness, separated from him by our sins. We choose to go in the wrong direction, down the wrong roads, doing the wrong things, and his heart aches and longs for us. Strange, isn't it, that while we seek to find ways to get away and stay away from God, God declares that he sent Jesus to seek us.

Then my mind thought about the declaration. In the case of the lost cat, somebody had gone to a lot of trouble to print up some words and put out the

message. Somebody did not want the cat to stay lost. In a strange way, it turned my head and my heart back to Christmas.

Literally for centuries, God had been putting out the word — his wonderful word — that we did not need to stay lost. Prophets had come and proclaimed that word. Psalm writers had framed that word in poetry and put it to music. The declaration from Heaven was and continues to be clear — that we do not have to stay in our lost condition.

That brought me to a third Christmas truth that spoke of a description. The folks who had lost the cat described how the cat looked. As I had joined in the search I saw several cats, but none that fit the description of the lost one.

When God described us, in our lostness, it was characterized by one word — sin! The one thing that had taken us away was sin. The one mark that characterized each of us was sin. Sometimes it is sin that

is outward and overt, and sometimes it is sin that is inward, sneaky, and creepy — but it is still sin. It is the description of every one of us.

The Bible says that, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We may want to pretend that we are not sinners, but we are! We may want to act as though we are not lost, but we are!

That brought me to a fourth and final, wonderful Christmas thought concerning the directions. The folks with the lost cat had given clear, simple directions how to get the cat back. They included an address and telephone number that anyone could follow. The directions would reunite a lost cat with a family.

With greenery, lights, and festive decorations everywhere — lostness! A family whose heart was beating for "foundness" and reunion took center stage. Whether we are able to see it and keep it in focus, that was the heart of God when Jesus came to save us, to find us, and to reunite us. The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost!

Just think about it. If somebody dearly, deeply loved a cat so much that they would send out a search party for it — how much more must our loving Heavenly Father, who cares when a sparrow falls, care about us?

Merry Christmas!



# Commandments billboard goes up in Ark.

HAMPTON, Ark. (BP) — The public display of the Ten Commandments in several states has caught the eye of many spectators, some of whom have legally forced the removal of these God-given mandates from public property — but don't expect a billboard-sized Ten Commandments display in south Arkansas to come down anytime soon.

On the southbound side of Highway 167, a thoroughfare from Little Rock to south Arkansas, Joe Glass, a member of Galilee Church in El Dorado, has posted the Ten Commandments on a 8-by-20-



foot leased billboard located on the outskirts of Hampton, a small town about 25 miles north of El Dorado.

"You never know who might pass by this sign and need to be encouraged," said Glass. "God tells us ... that his Word will not return void. I just don't believe that anyone can read God's Word and not be affected in some way by it."

Many people who travel the state highway might never attend a church to hear the Word of God, Glass said. "I believe that placing the Ten Commandments on the sign will allow more people to see and read the Word," he said of the billboard, which is colorfully painted in primary colors. No church is identified, nor is Glass.

"It's just another way to express God's Word. Every little thing we do for the Lord can make a difference."

Glass said he chose the Hampton location a few months ago because of its high-traffic and 45 mph speed limit. Previously he had leased a sign in El Dorado. "Hopefully, drivers are slowing down in the city limits," he said.

As a result, "they have more time to take a look at the sign."

One Hampton pastor, Horace Dunn, said the sign is a hit among community residents. "It caught my attention right away," he said. "I keep hearing positive things about the sign."

The idea to post the Ten Commandments on a highway billboard came to Glass while he was traveling to Little Rock a few years ago.

Recalling that often roadside signs and advertisements depict or promote non-Christian images or products, Glass said, "I told my wife, 'There should be signs that lift up and encourage people' instead of being so negative."

He took his own advice. With his wife's help, they designed and painted the sign. This task came easy for Glass who worked with a sign company several years ago.

Grabbing the attention of travelers is his goal, Glass said, acknowledging he has received more attention than he anticipated. Thankfully, he said, he has heard no negative feedback from anyone who would oppose the Ten Commandments.

In recent months, a local television reporter tracked down Glass through the leasing company and asked to interview

hoping to reach."

Glass faced a few obstacles in tackling the project. While preparing the sign, he pulled a muscle in his right shoulder, forcing him to postpone its completion.

He also faced the sickness and eventual death of a family member that hindered his plans.

"I knew Satan was trying to detract me, but I was determined to get that sign up," he declared.

Eventually Glass was able to post the sign, but another obstacle soon flared up, literally. An electrical transformer near the billboard exploded, causing the nearby grass and underbrush to catch fire.

The poles attached to the sign also caught fire, but the Ten Commandments were unharmed, he noted.

Although Glass has contemplated moving the sign to another site, he said, wherever he decides to relocate it he hopes the message will reach people.

"I will never know until I get to heaven who ... has been touched by God's Word on the sign," he stated.

"I only hope it has somehow been a blessing," Glass said.

him about his "interesting" sign. He hesitantly agreed.

"I wanted God to have all the glory, not me. I just want people to be blessed," he said.

Since that time, Glass has received several phone calls from friends, co-workers and family who have praised him for taking the time and money to fund the project.

Another area resident went so far as to write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper thanking the "anonymous" person who put up the Ten Commandments sign.

He also received encouragement from the leasing company president who told him, "I hope you can reach everyone you are

## Dutch lawmakers OK euthanasia

LONDON (BP) — The Dutch parliament's Nov. 28 decision to legalize euthanasia will place more pressure on vulnerable groups such as the disabled and elderly, and it is another step closer to the practice of eugenics as promoted in 1930s Germany, Dutch proliferators say.

The 104-40 vote in favor of decriminalizing a practice that has been tolerated for 25 years makes the Netherlands the first country in the world to have legalized euthanasia.

Bert Dorenbos of the pro-life group Cry for Life said by telephone Nov. 29 that the move was "shocking, but confirmed in law what was already being done."

"As the [Dutch] minister of health has now said, you can plan your death. If you have the beginning of Alzheimer's, and do not want to go on with it, you can plan your death, and your doctor will help you to be killed," Dorenbos told the Internet news site CNSNews.com.

The new legislation requires Senate approval, but this is considered a formality. Euthanasia and "assisted suicide" — when doctors provide, but do not administer the legal drug — have been widely practiced in the Netherlands, and up to 4,000 people die this way each year.

Britain's Voluntary Euthanasia Society (VES) welcomed the Dutch move as showing the way for other countries.

"Dutch opinion polls show that a clear 90% of Dutch people fully support their government's proposed legislation," VES chairman Malcolm Hurwitt said, "and polls in the UK indicate that about 80% of people support the principle of voluntary euthanasia here too."

## ACLU forces county to remove Commandments

WASHINGTON (BP) — Threatened by fines, residents of a small town in Indiana say they were forced to remove a monument displaying the Ten Commandments from the lawn of the local courthouse after a federal judge ruled on behalf of the state's American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) chapter.

"We were ordered to take it down; we were given five days to take it down, or the county was going to be fined \$1,000 every day it wasn't taken down and each commissioner, \$200 a day," Tim Terry, president of the Lawrence County Commission in Bedford, Ind., told the Internet news site CNSNews.com.

U.S. District Judge Sarah Evans Barker issued the ruling Nov. 13, basing it on arguments set forth in an earlier case

involving the same monument at the statehouse building in Indianapolis.

In that hearing, held this past July, Indiana chapter of the ACLU accused Democratic Gov. Frank O'Bannon of unlawfully endorsing religion on government property after he proclaimed his intent to display a limestone monument that included carvings of the Ten Commandments, the U.S. Bill of Rights, and the preamble of the state's constitution.

The limestone piece, which was still being built when the Indiana ACLU chapter filed its complaint, was similar to a 1958 monument that had been located on the lawn of the state capitol until 1992, when a protestor destroyed it, reportedly because of its religious overtones.

In 1995, state officials began looking for ways to replace the

statehouse sculpture at minimal cost to the taxpayers.

Before the volunteer stonecutters could finish their work, however, Baker ruled that the monument could not be returned to the public grounds.

That's when Lawrence County commissioners, acting on the suggestion of state Rep Brent Steele, offered to temporarily house the monument outside their courthouse while the governor's appeal process continued in an Illinois district court.

"The [Lawrence County] newspaper published an account of the minutes of that commissioners meeting" where they voted unanimously in favor of accepting the sculpture," Steele said, "and the (Indiana ACLU) sent a man down here... and they sued."

Judge Barker — "bent out of shape because it was the

same stone" she had just disallowed from the statehouse, Steele said — refused to consider the nearly 10,000 petitioners who signed a document in support of displaying the monument at the courthouse, ordering the county to remove it within five days or face stiff penalties.

The county's attorneys are not suing, Steele said, because the state has already pursued a reversal of decision, to be heard at the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago. A hearing date has not been specified.

"It was never meant to be there [at the Lawrence County Courthouse permanently]. It was just temporary, until the state's appeal was through ... and I have faith that the Chicago court" will reverse Barker's decision, Steele said.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



**RAs of South McComb Church, McComb,** sponsored a float in the Christmas parade, entitled Jesus is the Reason for the Season. Pictured are RAs, GAs, Mission Friends, and Andrea Miller. RAs are led by David and Andrea Miller.

The choir of **Barnes Crossing Church, Saltillo,** will present the cantata, On Christmas Day, Dec. 24 during the 11 a.m. worship service. Harrell Hill is minister of music. J. D. Johnson is pastor.

**Poplar Flat Church, Louisville,** will present Bringing Christmas Home on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 17 at 11 a.m. Gayle Pope is pastor. Tim Drane is minister of music.

The sanctuary choir of **Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson,** will present the Christmas musical, Wonderful Name, on Dec. 17 at 10:30 a.m. The choir is under the direction of Ross Johnson, minister of music. The children's choir under the direction of Katrina Marler, children's coordinator, will present the musical The Birthday, at 5:30 p.m. Steven D. Potts is pastor.

The adult Christmas program, The Perfect Christmas, will be presented at **Zion Hill Church, Wesson,** on Dec. 17 at 6:45 p.m. A candlelight service will be held on Dec. 24 at 5 p.m. The theme will be The Light of the World and The Lord's Supper. Services on Dec. 31 will be led by youth in the 10:45 a.m. service and a gospel singing will be held at 4:30 p.m.

Christmas cantata will be presented at **Leaf River Church, Smith County,** Sunday, Dec. 17, at 11 a.m. Lunch will follow.

Live Nativity scene will be presented at **Enon Church, Grenada,** on Dec. 21, 22, and 23, from 5-8 p.m.

**Maybank Church, Hattiesburg,** will present Steve Walker, music evangelist from Pinola, in a concert of Christmas music, Dec. 17 at 6 p.m. For more information, call (601) 582-4997 or 847-4375.

Members of **Calvary Church, Pike Association,** recently presented gift-filled shoeboxes to children in Third World countries. The project,

Operation Christmas Child, is a mission project targeting Third World countries where many children are homeless. Children pictured (from left) are Jed Fortenberry, Carley Fortenberry, Michelle Lawrence, Nicole Alexander, Noele Coker, Garrett Rayborn, Joey Leggette, and Ross Busby. Also pictured is Steve Lofton, minister of music, and Harold Gartman, pastor.



Members of Calvary Church, Pike Association

## STAFF CHANGES

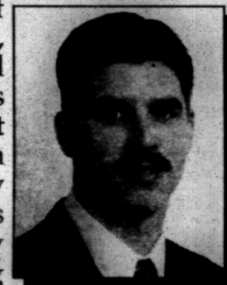
**Philip Cooper** was called as pastor of **Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson,** effective Nov. 19. Cooper previously served at **Chester Church, Ackerman.**



Cooper

**Holcomb Church, Holcomb,** has called **Danny White** from **First Church, Greenwood,** as minister of music.

**Victoria Heights Church, Victoria,** has called **Marcus Russell** as youth minister. A native of Alabama, Russell received his education at **Auburn University** and is presently completing his masters at **Mid America Seminary.** Bob Johnson is pastor.



Russell

**Bissell Church, Tupelo,** has called **Eddie Wren** to serve as pastor effective Oct. 22. He previously served at **Green Valley Church, Pontotoc.**

**Poplar Flat, Louisville,** has called **Tim Drane** as minister of music. Drane is a graduate of **William Carey College** and



Dottley

**Robert Dottley** is the new pastor of **Cedar View Church, Olive Branch,** effective Dec. 3. While most of his ministry was in the Mississippi Delta until his move to Olive Branch in 1992, Dottley served as associate pastor at **Immanuel Church** and most recently at **Longview Heights Church,** both in Olive Branch.

New Orleans Seminary. Gayle Pope is pastor.

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1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 14, 2000

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference

February 15-16, 2001, First Baptist Church, Vicksburg

(For all church music leaders and musicians)

Registration: 10 a.m. - 1:45 p.m., Thursday

— Conference 1:45 p.m., Thursday thru noon, Friday

**Concert with Singing Churchmen, Thursday evening, 7 p.m.**



Guest

**Albert L. Travis**

Professor of organ, SBTS

### Additional Concerts

*The Mississippi College Singers in concert, Thursday, 3 p.m., Jamie Meaders, Director*

*Children's Choir of Mississippi in concert, Thursday, 4:15 p.m., Joanna Hunt, Director*



**Mississippi Singing Churchmen**

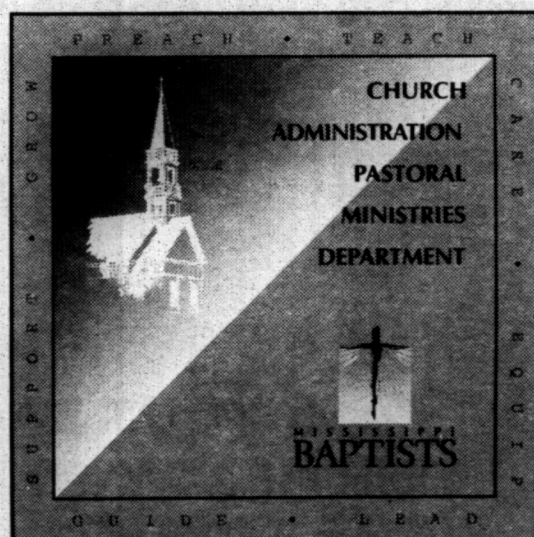
Milfred Valentine, Director

**Conference Leaders:** **Albert Travis**, SWBTS; **Joanna Hunt**, Choral Director at Madison Central High School, Madison  
**Al Carden**, Mississippi Baptist Health Systems, Pastoral Care Department, Jackson

Call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 271 for registration and motel information

## CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCE

February 1, 2001  
First Baptist Church  
Madison



**Theme: "Leading People Effectively and Managing Resources Efficiently"**

**Purpose:** To provide information and challenge to church leaders on the administration, leadership, and resources of church finances with a biblical basis being strongly emphasized.

**Target Audience:** Pastors, administrators, treasurers, financial committees, deacons, trustees

**Registration Fee:** \$10 (includes lunch at the church)

Sponsored by:

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB  
Metro Baptist Association, Jackson

Call 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 for more information.

## Deacon Ministry Emphasis

**Deacon Ministry Emphasis...** is a plan with specific actions that highlight deacon ministries and involves deacon training and service.

**The Purpose of Deacon Emphasis Is To:**

- Focus on their biblical role
- Build team relationships
- Secure involvement in ministries
- Develop skills for ministry

**Deacon Emphasis Week** is scheduled for January 14-21, 2001, but a deacon ministry emphasis may be conducted at any time during the year.

To participate, the deacons would choose at least two actions and perform them during a specified time (preferably during **Deacon Emphasis Week**).

A certificate of recognition will be presented to each deacon body that participates.

**For other projects and information, contact:**

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department  
Keith Gordon, consultant  
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530  
(601)968-3800, extension 307, or 1-800-748-1651



# CALLED TO BE ONE

STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE, BROADMOOR BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON  
MONDAY & TUESDAY, JANUARY 15-16, 2001



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Adkins



Rick  
Ousley



John Ed  
Mathison



The Affords



Reggie & Ladye  
Smith



Jim  
Shaddix



Richard Harris



Fred  
Luter



John  
Avant

For more information contact the Evangelism Department, MBCB, 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800

EVANGELISM STUDY  
SERIES

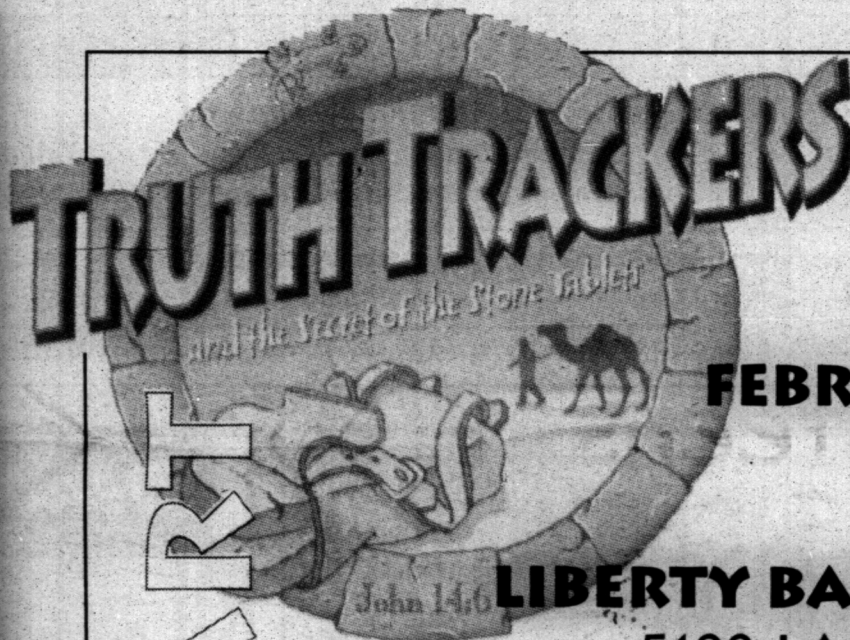


PREVIEW &  
BRUNCH

GRACE

January 30, 2001, 9 a.m. - noon  
First Baptist Church, Clinton  
February 1, 2001, 9 a.m. - noon  
First Baptist Church, Biloxi

For more information contact the Discipleship  
Department, Ministry Department  
968-3800 or in the Jackson area 968-3800



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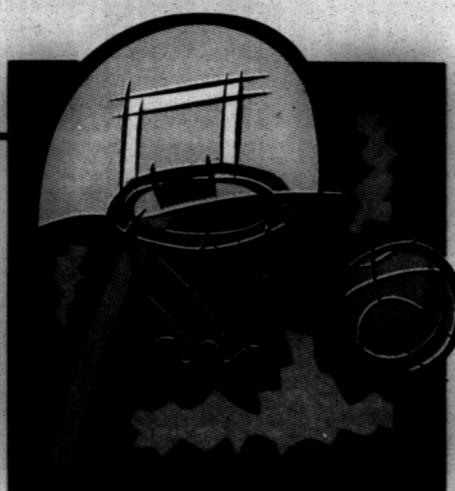
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- Missionaries
- Basketball
- Testimonies
- Cheerleaders
- Music

## GA/Acteens CAMPUS DAY

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9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Cost: \$7.50

(includes basketball game, meal,  
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### GA/Acteens Campus Day Registration Form

Registration Deadline: Friday, January 26  
(No refunds after deadline, however substitutions may be made)

Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Association \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact person \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$7.50= \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed  
Make checks payable to: MBCB  
Mail completed form to: WMU, Campus Day  
PO Box 530  
Jackson MS 39205

Need info? Call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 316, or in Jackson, 292-3316

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Matt & Shea Williams



David Mitchell

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# Pray this day for...

## December 15 - January 11, 2001

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

*LISTENING TO GOD - O God give me the grace today, to recognize the stirrings of Thy Spirit within my soul and to listen most attentively to all that Thou hast to say to me. Let not the noises of the world ever so confuse me that I cannot hear Thee speak.*

*John Baillie*

Pray for John and Luanne Marshall, missionaries in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, as they train groups in how to lead "Experiencing God" groups. Their goal is to start a group on every college campus in their state. An estimated 98.5 percent of the students do not know Christ as Savior.

Pray for Tunisian Arab believers who are students in Tunisia. Pray that the Lord will use them to be lights for Christ to their fellow classmates and that they will be truly bold witnesses for Him.

Pray for the salvation of approximately 4 million Cubans who are involved in "Santeria," African deities and Catholicism. Pray that the enemy's stronghold on this totally unreached people group will be broken so that they may turn from darkness to the light of Jesus Christ.

Missionaries in the Netherlands ask you to pray for refugees who claim a culturally Christian background. They have a Christian identity which they associate with their ethnic or family history, but they lack a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Pray for these refugees to completely give their lives to Christ.

Rick Brenny is the director of the Jefferson Street Baptist Center in Louisville, Ky., which works with homeless people. Pray for the staff's safety, discernment, wisdom, and focus. Also pray for his friend's son who has a serious type of cancer.

Give thanks to God for the outreach of Ghanaian Baptists to the Nzema people living along the coast of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Missionary Carolyn Houts writes: "We had good responses in showing the 'Jesus' film to Nzema-speaking people. Pray for the people who do follow up on those who trusted Christ."

Eddie Miller is an associational missionary in Fernley, Nev. They are opening Steamboat Baptist Church. Pray for God to call a church planter and for the finances to purchase the building. Pray for Eddie's family.

Pray for missionaries Tom and Cynthia Martin as they continue learning the Guarayu language. Ask God to give them an extraordinary ability to hear and understand the heart language of the Guarayu people.

Many university students will be visiting China this Christmas to share the love of Jesus with those who have not heard. Ask God to smooth their way as they journey to China at the season of gift giving, bearing in their hearts the greatest gift of all.

Missionary Wes Thrush in Mei Nung, Taiwan, writes: "Soon after a prayer walking team from South Carolina prayed in front of a Buddhist temple here, the demons have not been able to control the people as before." Pray that other praying teams join in praying for the people as 97% of them do not know Christ.

On November 6-10, God used the skills of a volunteer from Texas to share Christ using quilt squares to Dominican Republic women attending a quilting class. The women were spellbound. Pray that these women will open their hearts to Jesus and receive Him as their personal Savior.

Baptist missionaries ministering in England ask you to intercede for a growing number of Afghans displaced because of a ruthless regime in their home country. They range from the well-educated to the uneducated, but they are an "open" people. Pray that the Giver of Peace would break through their hearts.

Thank God for answered prayer for a nurse for the clinic in the Taiwan earthquake area. Pray for Jennifer Chiang, a "city girl," as she adjusts to living in a rural setting. Ask God to use her youth and willing witness to minister to many.

A hospital in Yemen is shifting its focus. It is decreasing its inpatient load and increasing its community health emphasis. Thousands of Yemeni Arabs have been healed there during the last 30 years. Pray for those who are hurting because of this change. Pray for wisdom for those who are making the changes.

All IMB missionaries working in the Eastern Africa Region will meet in Kenya on January 3-8, 2001. Please pray for Henry Blackaby as he speaks to them. Ask God to use this time to give His people a fresh vision, and pray that each person present will choose to follow His specific leadership.

Songkha Province in Thailand has 61,000 college and vocational students. A student campus worker is needed to reach these students. Pray for God to quickly send the right person or couple to fill this position.

Team Netherlands shared the following: "One of our key refugee leaders recently began meeting with members of a cult group, unaware of the group's unscriptural doctrine. Praise God for this man's willingness to receive the truth from one of our team members! Pray for truth to prevail in the refugees' lives."

For (1) Youth Evangelism Conference; Mississippi College (2) Pray today for Emperor Akihito of Japan (3) Pray for cassette-tape ministries under way to reach predominantly oral tribal groups in Laos.

Please be in prayer for ISC workers David and Lola Curran of the Ile-de-France Team as they submit proposals to Paris area churches concerning the use of their church facilities for teaching courses of interest to business leaders.

After missionaries, the Rorabaughs, shared the gospel with 1,050 Barabaig households, a Barabaig elder spoke up: "The wages of sin is death, but there are also wages from being born again, eternal life. We have had three groups tell us the same message, so choose life through Jesus Christ." Pray that a church planting movement will begin here.

"Samson," who recently accepted Christ, lives in a Last Frontier nation. In answer to prayer, Samson's family dropped their threat to turn him in to the authorities. He is now living apart from his family and being disciplined by local believers. Pray for his Christian growth and restored relationships with his family and be a witness to them.

There are three Sudanese Baptist churches in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in northern Kenya, near the Sudan border. They are weak churches, so ask God to do a mighty work in their midst so that they will trust the Lord and know that He is their provider.

Please pray for a team that is distributing videos of the "Jesus" film through many channels in South Africa. Recently, the video was shown in two schools, with a combined total of 650 attending. Pray for questions to be raised in the hearts of these students and teachers as they reflect on all they saw and heard about Jesus.

A women's group in SE Asia and Oceania has begun a ministry to domestic helpers. Many of the helpers are abused and oppressed by their employers. The group is attempting to be their advocates for better working conditions and introduce them to the Lord. Pray for the helpers to come to know the Lord as their Savior.

Missionaries Toby and Janet Walker report that two volunteers from Oklahoma were instrumental in discipling Christians in three missions of Cerrito Baptist Church in Entre Rios Province of Argentina. Pray for the 120 new Christians who have begun to study the Bible as a result of the volunteers' efforts.

For almost two years, Baptists in a major city of Colombia have been praying to establish an evangelistic telephone counseling referral ministry, which began Sept. 24. Pray that these phone lines can keep operating and that many personal contacts will result in getting the callers to attend Bible studies in their area.

Missionaries Stan (former pastor of Drew BC) and Pam Wafler recently completed orientation at the Missionary Learning Center, Richmond Va. Stan, Pam and their children plan to arrive in Kenya on January 2. Pray for them as they learn the language and get settled on the field.

The members of Nadi Baptist Church in Fiji are seeking to share the gospel in an area where many Indians live. They have been looking for an opening to an area of Nadi known as "Bangladesh," which houses many squatters. One of the church members has the opportunity to move to that area. Pray for his ministry.

3-84

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6-85

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7-85

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8-97

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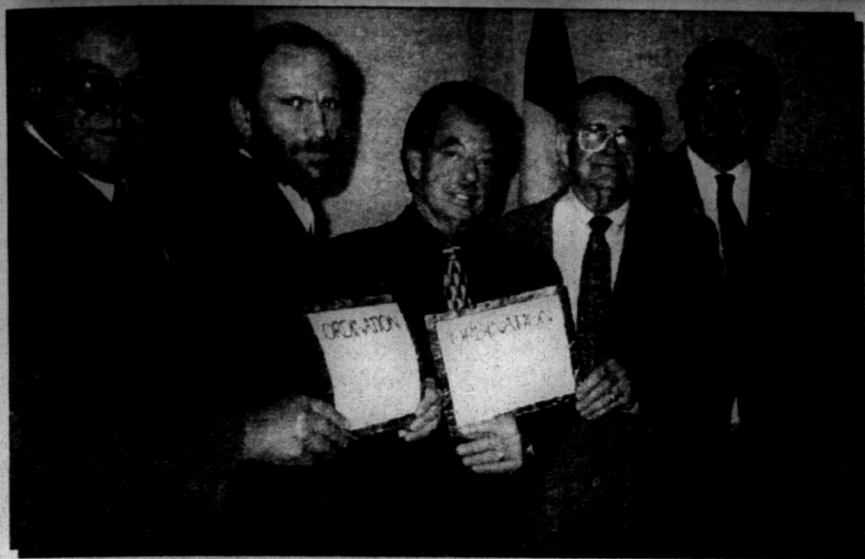


**Take a moment to send a card to encourage the children of our missionaries!**

# HOUSE TOPS.



## NAMES IN THE NEWS



Deacons of Faith Church, Hickory Flat

Faith Church, Hickory Flat, held ordination services for deacons on Nov. 12. Jimmy Davis and Vic Hudson were ordained in the evening service after which time a reception was held in the fellowship hall. Pictured (from left) are Elgin Thompson, present deacon; Davis; Hudson;

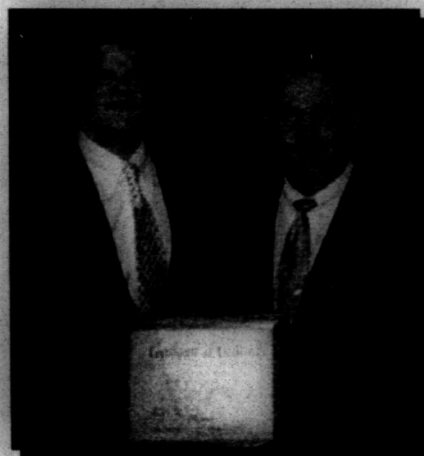
Ellis Perkins, present deacon; and Bill Dowdy, pastor.

Irene Rawls was recently honored at a reception for 28 years of service as secretary of Oral Church, Hattiesburg. Jerry Jones, pastor, presented a plaque of appreciation and Margaret

Fortenberry, Lamar Association, presented an acknowledgment from Associational Women's Missionary Union for her many years of service.



Shady Grove Church, Panola County, licensed Jarrett Jamison to the ministry on Nov. 26. Jamison serves on the staff as youth minister. He attends Delta State University and plans to enter seminary upon his graduation in May 2001. Pictured (from left) are Jamison and Terry Tribble, pastor.



Jamison and Tribble



H. Ketchum, Grisham, Wilbanks, and R. Ketchum

Hughey Ketchum, 91 years old, was baptized on Nov. 16 by Lamar Grisham, pastor of North Ripley Church, Ripley. "Our church received a very special outpouring of the Holy Spirit because of his salvation. We have learned as a church that we should 'pray without ceasing' for our loved ones," said Grisham. Pictured (from left) are Ketchum and Grisham, (background) Cleo Wilbanks and Russell Ketchum.

### 1ST ANNUAL PRE-NEW YEAR'S "GOSPEL SINGING CONCERT"

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The Magnolia Center on  
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# N.C. church leads way in Lottie, CP support

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. (BP) — Whether kindled by the example of former pastor and missionary H.H. McMillan, or by members-turned-missionaries John and Doris McGee, or by former pastor N.A.

Melton's commitment to Cooperative Program giving, Fruitland Church in Hendersonville, N.C., has provided strong support for international missions since its beginnings.

In the past 15 years, members of the congregation have nearly tripled their total Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and overall missions giving. They sent \$173,920 to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) international missions offering during that span and \$482,688 to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Cooperative Program, which includes support for SBC international missions and ministries.

"Every pastor would want to serve a church that is so

attuned to missions," said Fruitland pastor Mike Smith.

During its early days, the church was led by McMillan and William Powell, powerful orators who came to Hendersonville by way of invitations to teach at nearby Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute.

McMillan was a pastor-turned-missionary, while Powell often preached on the importance of missions, Smith said.

Following them was Melton, who led the church for nearly 50 years and led the church to a yearly one-half-percent-of-budget increase in missions giving until it reached 32%.

After reaching that mark in the late 1950's, Fruitland's members decided to set 30% as their annual goal and it has stayed that way since, Smith said. The reduction has not hurt giving.

"It has been our tradition or custom to give to missions," Sitton said. "God has blessed us with leadership through all these years to continue to support his missions locally, nationally and to the uttermost part of the world."

For more than 20 years, Fruitland Church benefited from accounts of the work of the McGees, who served as missionaries to Nigeria and encouraged missions giving as they explained how it helped the spread of the gospel.

So influential was their witness that Fruitland's annual Lottie Moon offering was renamed the John and Doris McGee Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

There could be concern that support for missions would overshadow Fruitland Church's other needs, but Smith said that has never happened.

"In fact, we have extensively remodeled every area of our church, as well as landscaping the outside," he said. "Amazingly, we are debt-free!"

Fruitland's members share great joy in knowing "that we, as a church, realize that we are part of something that is bigger than our little piece of turf," Smith said.



MISSIONS GIVING — Twins, Nita, and Nora Stepp, collect the mission offering at Fruitland Church in Hendersonville during a recent missions emphasis. (BP photo)

## Midwestern trustees tap Phil Roberts

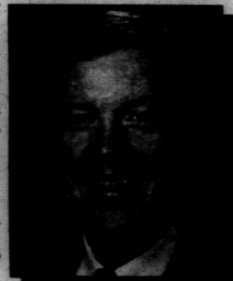
KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — R. Philip Roberts is the unanimous choice of the presidential search committee of Midwestern Seminary, chairman Carl Weiser announced Nov. 28. Roberts currently serves as vice president of strategic cities for the North American Mission Board and as resident theologian for the Southern Baptist entity.

"It is with a definite sense of God's leading that I have accept-

ed the nomination of the presidential search committee of Midwestern Seminary," Roberts said Nov. 29. "I believe that the Lord has a wonderful and exciting future for this institution as it continues to contribute to ministerial training and thus the fulfillment of the Great Commission."

The 50-year-old Roberts and his wife, Anna, have two children, Naomi and Mark. He requested prayer for his family and Midwestern trustees "as they consider this crucial decision."

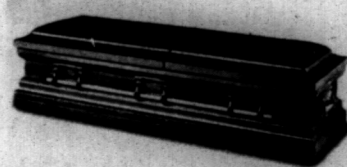
If elected, Roberts will become Midwestern's fourth president since its founding in 1957, succeeding Mark Coppenger, who led the seminary from 1995-99.



Roberts

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Roberts is the son of the late Ray Roberts, a church planter and the first executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.

Born in Danville, Ky., he earned a Ph.D. degree from the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He also holds a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary, a bachelor's degree from Georgetown (Ky.) College and has served as a graduate researcher at Oxford University in England.

### Michael's Watch



*But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said,*

*"The Lord rebuke you." - Jude 1:9*

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Additional information may be obtained by calling **First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi** at (662) 773-6246.

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## HARD TO BELIEVE

Editor:

It is hard to believe that our SBC leadership would allow portions of a liberal Bible to be printed in our Sunday School literature.

May I suggest that those who object to the NIV read the Preface to the New International Version of the Bible. The Preface are those pages in the front of the Bible which no one hardly ever reads.

In speaking of the goals of the translators it says, "...the translators were united in their commitment to the authority and infallibility of the Bible as God's Word in written form. They believe that it contains the divine answer to the deepest needs of humanity, that it sheds unique light on our path in a dark world, and it sets forth the way to our eternal well-being."

The Committee on Bible Translation were scholars from many denominations including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and other churches.

Tom F. Rayburn  
Clinton

## DISTURBED BY COVERAGE

Editor:

I was disturbed to see that, while Baptist Press articles relating to the situation in Texas have been completely excluded from The Baptist Record lately, you ran an article written exclusively from the Associated Baptist Press (ABP) perspective. The ABP is the news service that supports the Cooperative Baptist

Fellowship (CBF) and other dissident groups.

There were numerous inaccuracies in the article that have been well refuted since Texas took the action.

Nothing was said about conservatives being treated shabbily at the largely CBF-controlled Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) or that two of our seminary presidents, including the president of Southwestern, were not even allowed to speak to defend their seminaries against wrongful accusations.

The "moderates" are now satisfied for this to remain a

Texas problem. CBF, BGCT, and "Baptist Committed" leaders have been helping train groups calling themselves "Mainstream Baptists," to go back to their states, take over churches, associations, state conventions, and, in their own words, to do what Texas did and defund the SBC.

Representatives from 15 different states, including Mississippi, were present these sessions. People are being offered \$25,000 to start such groups in their states. Some states are already having problems with these groups.

## Baptist Homes, Inc. begins first project



Board members of Baptist Homes, Inc., and their families celebrate the ribbon cutting ceremony November 17 for the first group homes for the mentally retarded that the organization plans to construct on 80 acres of land north of Canton. The land was donated by Kay Foshee (second from left) and Foshee Construction Company of Canton. Tim Bobo (third from right) prepares to cut the ribbon as his father Charles Bobo (right), who serves as president of the organization's trustee board, looks on. Baptist Homes plans to seek a Certificate of Need from the State of Mississippi to build a pair of 10-bed homes that will serve both men and women. For more information on the project, contact Ruby Wadford, 32 Park Crest Place, Jackson, MS 39211. Telephone: (601) 956-1501.

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Most Baptists in Mississippi are still conservative and strongly support the SBC and its leaders. They deserve to be provided with information that is not slanted against the SBC.

If the readers really want to know what is going on, go to [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) and click on Baptist2Baptist.

Ida South  
Maben

## WORSHIP GOD

Editor:

This letter is in reference to Harry Thornton's letter to the editor in the November 16 issue where he encourages the use of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. I want to comment on a couple of his points.

The first point is the absence of Acts 8:37 in the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible. This verse is footnoted in the NIV as "Some late manuscripts..." and then verse 37 is quoted. So, there is a reason the translators left it out of the main text and they state their reason. Although the same verse is in the main text of the New American Standard Bible, it has a similar footnote.

The second point is the example of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures. That translation actually says "and the Word was a god." (Note the lowercase "g".) However, keep in mind who made and published this translation — The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the organization that runs the Jehovah's Witnesses. The translation of John 1:1 was made as such to support their denial of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The KJV is not perfect, either. I would say that most of the differences between translations come from the manuscripts on which the translation is based. Even today, scholars will critique any version for a particular verse not being translated just right.

Just make sure that worship is directed toward God and not a Bible translation.

Justin Hammack  
Bay Springs

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.



# Thompson: mentoring biblically mandated

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Spiritually mature Christian women serving as mentors to others are merely carrying out the biblical mandate that one generation is to teach the next, Janet Thompson told partic-

She also is author of "Woman to Woman: How to Start, Grow and Maintain a Mentoring Ministry," published in November by LifeWay.

Thompson started the ministry at Saddleback in 1995 and, to date, 700 women have been matched in six-month mentoring relationships. Many who originally were mentored have gone on to become mentors.

In addition, through Saddleback conferences and published resources, women's ministry leaders in more than 500 churches in the United States and other countries have received mentoring training.

"The younger generation is hungry and crying for us to be involved in their lives," Thompson said.

Through mentoring relationships where women commit to meet weekly with each other for six months, "We literally have seen marriages saved. We have seen husbands coming to the Lord and children coming home."

"I never stop being in awe of what God does when women get involved with each other," she said.

The leader of a women's ministry program at church doesn't have to be the one who heads the mentoring ministry, Thompson emphasized.

"Go back and start talking about mentoring in your church. Begin to see who the Lord brings to your mind. The Lord will bring the workers to the harvest," she said.

Before starting a mentoring ministry, Thompson said research needs to be conducted to determine the chronological and spiritual age ranges of the women in the church.

Names, addresses, and phone numbers of potential women to serve as mentors and those to be mentored need to be identified.

After developing a ministry plan, Thompson urged testing it for three months with a group of women and "then modify and customize any changes you need to make." Thompson suggests holding periodic orientation coffees in homes to bring together persons interested in mentoring and being mentored.

Women are then matched by the leadership group through a focused prayer effort the next day. One week later, a kickoff meeting is held and training provided for mentors and also for those to be mentored.

Former participants in the ministry serve as prayer warriors, encouragers, hostesses for coffees, coordinators for special events or a newsletter or Internet site.

"You start small and begin to add things that give flavor and fun to the ministry," Thompson said. "We did not try to be all things to all women at Saddleback," she said. "Everything we do is focused on bringing women together in a mentoring relationship."

Approximately 300 women attended the three-day forum in Nashville, Tenn.



**MENTORING MANDATE** — Janet Thompson speaks about mentoring to participants in the Women's Enrichment Ministry Leadership Forum Nov. 14-16 at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

ipants in the Women's Enrichment Ministry Leadership Forum, Nov. 14-16 at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Mentoring is simply teaching what somebody already has taught you so you can train the next generation," said Thompson, director of the Woman to Woman mentoring ministry of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif.

## Growth in women's ministries cited as positive

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Continuing spiritual and numerical growth in women's ministries in Southern Baptist churches were cited as signs of encouragement for the future by a speaker in the Women's Enrichment Ministry Leadership

Forum, Nov. 14-16 at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. Rhonda Kelley, coordinator of women's ministries at New Orleans Seminary, said, "... we need to always ask if what we're doing is making an

impact in the lives of women."

She listed several observations about the current health of women's ministries, beginning with her belief that the focus in churches is "on spiritual growth, not entertainment. Our women are not going to spend a lot of time on fluff."

Also, Kelley said she sees women's ministries moving from periodic, special events to ongoing programs.

"We used to focus on special events because people don't like to make a commitment," she said, "but if they come to events and like them, they want more."

Women's ministries are working effectively with other church ministries and programs, Kelley said, "not just doing their own thing."

In another observation, she said there is an increased focus on ministry rather than activities. "Women are not just getting together for the sake of getting together."

While earlier versions of women's ministries focused on large group events, Kelley said the current trend is more toward small group gatherings.

"That's why small group Bible studies and mentoring relationships are so important," she said.

In a related area, she said today's women's ministries are more team-led than leader-led.

Also, she cited an increase in cross-generational relationships among women rather than age-graded activities.

In another area, Kelley praised the increasing support of Southern Baptist Convention entities for women's ministry.

"We also see it at the state and associational levels," she pointed out.

She also reported seeing "vibrant women's ministries in all sizes of churches."

Finally, Kelley praised a "continuing interest in hands-on involvement in missions and ministry."



*I have been told by a counselor that my spouse is "passive aggressive." What does that mean?*

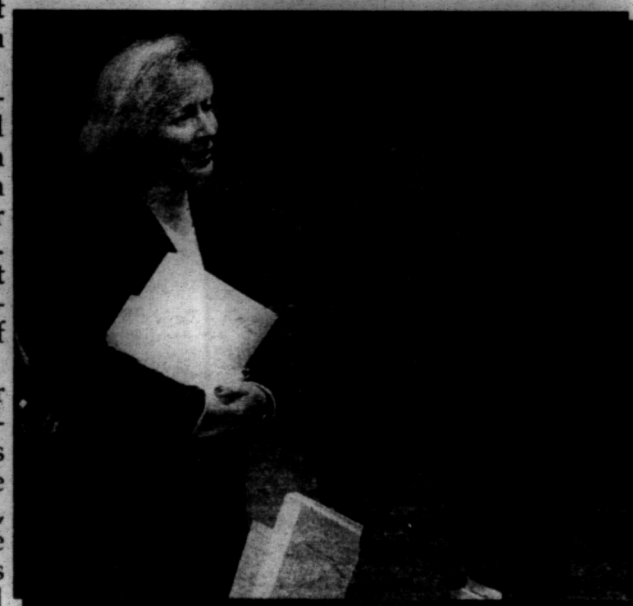
Passive means quiet, behind the scenes. Aggressive means attacking and forceful. Put the two traits together and a person is created who is a seething force that will not be honest in their hurt, frustration, or fear — and will look for hidden ways to "get even, or get back" when they feel vulnerable. To be aggressive means to win and to get the upper hand. To be passive means they never let someone else know that something is bothering them. A passive aggressive person sends conflicting and confusing messages. Passive aggressive behavior is seen in the person who conveniently "forgets" to do things for someone else. They simply did not hear a request, or pretend that they did not notice something. This

type of behavior suggests that the person is really hurting and is fearful of letting others in on his/her hurt. A great book is Neil Clark Warren's *Make Anger Your Ally*. He not only talks about passive aggressive anger, but exploding and holding anger as well.

*What is your advice to spouses who are married to people who always demand to have things their way?*

Controllers are afraid that if they trust someone, they will be let down and hurt. Controllers are very fearful people. They are scared and insecure. Pray for them that they will allow the Holy Spirit to have his way in their lives, and that they not try to dictate to God how God should work. Be very careful in challenging this type of person in public or when they are escalating a con-

frontation. Wait for times where things are moving calmly and then share things from your perspective using first-person ("I") statements. Even then you may not get the response you seek, you may be able to say some things that they will hear. Speaker and author Gary Smalley, in most of his writings, encourages use of "word pictures" to describe things. These word pictures allow an individual to "see" things as they are in language — sports analogies, common work experiences, shared hobbies etc. Look for ways to affirm your spouse in things that he/she does well; this type of person needs a lot of affirmation and encouragement. Their "love tank" gets low quite rapidly. They don't realize God is not nearly as interested in their performance, as he is in them being the child he created them to be.



**TALKING MINISTRIES** — Rhonda Kelley, (left) coordinator of women's ministries at New Orleans Seminary, speaks to Cindy Evers of Northside Church, Tifton, Ga., at the Women's Enrichment Ministry Leadership Forum Nov. 14-16 at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### New beginning

Luke 1:5-9, 11-17, 57-60

By Sharon Neff

When was the last time you were in a stable? A visit would reveal that they are filled with sights and sounds and smells that are not entirely pleasing to our modern sensibilities.

The scent of animal bodies combines with whiffs of manure to produce a uniquely "earthy" aroma. Animal noises can be pleasant or cacophonous, and sitting on a pile of hay can be a prickly experience.

Even the cleanest stables are rather dirty and have insects, mice, and other varmints.

Yet it was in this type of environment that God chose to fulfill his promise to send the Messiah, the Savior of the world. It was in a humble sta-

ble where Mary gave birth to God's Son Jesus with the Baby's first visitors being lowly shepherds.

Our minds are filled with Christmas card images of a stable with clean floors, animals that appear to be freshly bathed and deodorized, accented with straw looking as if it could pass for goose down. It could be almost as comfortable as a Comfort Inn.

In our mind's eye, that's how it should have been. In fact, we really wish that there had been a doctor or at least a midwife in attendance during the labor and delivery.

The harsh reality is that it was a real stable with everything associated with such an environment, that Joseph was



Neff

the only one there to help, and that Jesus' first bed was an animal feeding trough.

The wonderful reality is that everything went according to God's plan and that by discarding our romantic notions, we can learn some very important lessons.

All of the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth contrast with what one would normally think about the birth of a king. God did not choose for his Son to be born in luxury, attended by those of social prominence and wealth.

From the moment of his birth, Jesus was identified with common, ordinary people. Even people whom society would consider practically worthless nobodies.

An incomparable and indescribable angelic host announced Jesus' birth, but to whom was it announced? Not to the movers and shakers of that era, but to the shepherds

who were about the lowest class of people possible in Jewish society.

Because of the nature of their work, they were unable to follow the laws of purification and were therefore always considered unclean.

They were also unschooled in the Law and regarded as ignorant. What an unlikely bunch to be the first to get the news that the Messiah had been born!

Yet they greeted the announcement with joy mixed with fear and hurried to search for the Savior. They found him just as the angels had described it and worshiped him.

Then they didn't keep this wonderful news to themselves, they told everyone they could find.

What can all of this mean to us in the 21st century? Jesus came to save both the poor and lowly as well as the high and mighty. Jesus identified with those in humble circumstances and his invitation to salvation is given to all.

Think of someone completely opposite you in social class or status. Jesus identified with and came to save him. Think of someone of a different race. Jesus identified with and came to save her. Think of someone whom you would consider to be the least likely person to ever become a Christian. Jesus identified with and came to save that person.

Each person you thought about has been created in God's image and should be told about the good news of Jesus' birth. Each one of them is included in the invitation to place their faith in Jesus and accept his gift of salvation.

Perhaps we need to examine our own lives to see if our actions reflect the fact that Jesus' invitation is to all people. Perhaps we need to re-read the familiar story of Luke 2 with clear eyes and not rose-colored glasses.

Perhaps we need to pay a visit to a stable.

Neff is a member of First Church, Greenville.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Persistent witnessing

Acts 18:5-16

By Lee Yancey

Persistence could be defined as "to keep on keeping on" no matter what the circumstances. Enduring hardships and persecution was a natural part of Paul's life as he spread the Gospel. He was in prison numerous times, flogged, stoned and left for dead, three times was given forty lashes minus one, three times ship-wrecked, floated a day and a night in open seas, in danger of bandits, rivers, Gentiles, Jews, without food, snake-bitten, cold and naked, and constantly on the move.

If Paul ever thought about quitting, it is not recorded in the Bible. On the contrary, Paul is a perfect example of persistence. No matter what he would not quit. He would preach until his last breath was taken from him — and he did.

Second Timothy 4:6-7 records "I am already being poured out as a drink offering,

and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

History records that Paul was executed under the reign of Nero not long after he wrote Timothy. He was persistent in his witnessing to the very end.

**Abused (18:5-6).** Corinth was the most important city in the country of Greece. Religiously, a temple of Aphrodite was located on the large hill behind the city. As Aphrodite was the goddess of love and war, people worshiped her by giving money to the temple and by taking part in sexual acts with male and female prostitutes.

Because of the great immorality in Corinth, Paul wrote several letters to the church he founded there. Corinth was also the political and commercial center of Greece, surpassing Athens in importance.

Paul met Aquila and his wife,



Yancey

Priscilla, in Corinth. Like Paul, they were tentmakers. Being a Jew and a tentmaker, Aquila liked Paul immediately. He and Priscilla became two of Paul's closest friends and important leaders in the new church of Corinth. Paul worked along side them each day making tents and he rea-

soned each Sabbath with Jews and Greeks in the synagogue that Jesus was the Christ.

After Timothy and Silas joined him in Corinth, Paul preached every day. The Jews became abusive toward Paul rejecting his message. Paul shook his clothes in protest signifying his repudiation for any further responsibility for them and declaring that they were similar to pagans. He decided to focus only on the Gentiles.

**Assured (18:7-11).** While Paul did not stay anywhere very long, except prison, he did stay in Corinth for eighteen months. After being run out of the synagogue, he went next door to the house of Titius Justus for several reasons.

First, it was important for Paul to be closely associated with the Jewish synagogue

because the Christian faith did not have the official sanctioning of the Roman Empire. By worshiping in the synagogue or next to it, Paul could show the Roman officials that Christianity was not a new religion but a fulfillment of Judaism.

Secondly, many Gentiles found in Judaism a religion that gave them hope. Some became Jewish proselytes while others, not willing to go that far, continued to frequent the synagogues.

From the worship services and the teaching in the synagogue, the Gentiles received a fair understanding of Judaism. Paul believed that if he could stay affiliated with the Jewish synagogue by being located in close proximity to it, he could build on the foundation of Jewish faith that the spiritually hungry Gentiles possessed.

While meeting next to the synagogue in Titius Justus' home, many became Christians.

In a vision from the Lord, Paul was encouraged to continue witnessing in Corinth. He was told not to be afraid and that no harm would come to him. With this assurance from God, Paul continued his persistent witnessing.

**Absolved (18:12-16).** When the Jews had had enough, they

brought charges against Paul and brought him before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia.

Because Paul had closely identified Christianity as the fulfillment or extension of Judaism and had located the meeting place of the Christians first in the synagogue and then right next to it, Gallio did not see Christianity as a new religion that threatened the empire. His ruling was that the Jews and Paul should settle the matter among themselves.

This was a very important judicial decision for the spread of the Gospel in the Roman empire. Since Judaism was recognized under Roman law, a Christian branch of Judaism offered no threat. While Christianity was seen as a part of Judaism the high courts would hear no cases regarding them.

The Gospel has withstood opposition for almost two thousand years and offers encouragement to Christians facing opposition today. Because of people like Paul, the message of Christ has been passed through the ages. His persistence paid off for you and me.

Yancey is consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



# Rodeo offers opportunity for evangelism

CAVE CREEK, Ariz. (BP) — Men and women donned cowboy hats and boots to rope cattle, ride bucking broncos, wrestle steers, and hear God's Word in a dusty rodeo arena the weekend of Nov. 10-12.

Billed as the "Champion of Champions" Rodeo, the evangelistic event drew more than 300 participants and about as many spectators to Cave Creek, Ariz., a rural community northeast of Phoenix. It was a part of the Strategic Focus Cities evangelism and church planting emphasis in Phoenix sponsored by the North American

on the rodeo circuit brought about by years of competing side by side with them.

"These are professional rodeo cowboys," Infanzon said. "These are the ones who make their living every week rodeoing to put food on the table, just [as] if they were a plumber or a carpenter or an accountant. This is what they do for a living, except they do their work on the weekend."

"Jesus told us we need to minister to people where we're at, and where they're at, and that's the thing," Infanzon said. "That's what we're trying to do, through the rodeo, through Bible study. The cowboys that are passing through need to be fed."

"We gathered together this morning, all the contestants that were here, and we all prayed together," Infanzon said the first day of the event. "We stood in the middle of the arena and prayed for this rodeo, and prayed for all the cowboys that were traveling. You can't do that in major league baseball, but you can do it at a rodeo."

In addition to local volunteers, Infanzon brought in a few old friends. Announcer Coy Huffman, founder of Cowboy Church International, is a preacher who earns his living by working at rodeos. Huffman mixed event announcements with statements like, "We don't believe in luck, luck is for losers," and told the crowd about salvation in Jesus Christ.

"[Huffman] holds church services at every rodeo he goes to," Infanzon said. "He's our evangelist. He preaches the gospel to these cowboys, ministers to them while they're on the road, and encourages them to plug in to their local churches."

Mission Board in cooperation with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, local associations, and churches.

The unusual gathering resulted in 11 professions of faith in Christ, including several rodeo participants who accepted Christ during a Sunday morning worship service.

"It touched a crowd probably that we wouldn't touch in any other way," said Bill Agee, city coordinator for the Celebrate Jesus 2000/Strategic Focus Cities emphasis in Phoenix.

"It's the first time I've been able to share my testimony at a rodeo," John Kissel, a cowboy and retired schoolteacher from Penrose, Colo., said. "It's been really special, and a lot of seeds have been sown."

Janet Honeycutt, whose family supplied livestock for the rodeo, said, "It's been the most awesome rodeo ever, because I know the Lord is here."

The Christian rodeo was the brainchild of Michael Infanzon, pastor of Spur Cross Cowboy Church in Cave Creek and former rodeo cowboy.

Infanzon said the idea began when Agee asked a group of local pastors to think about what kind of ministry they would like to do during the year.

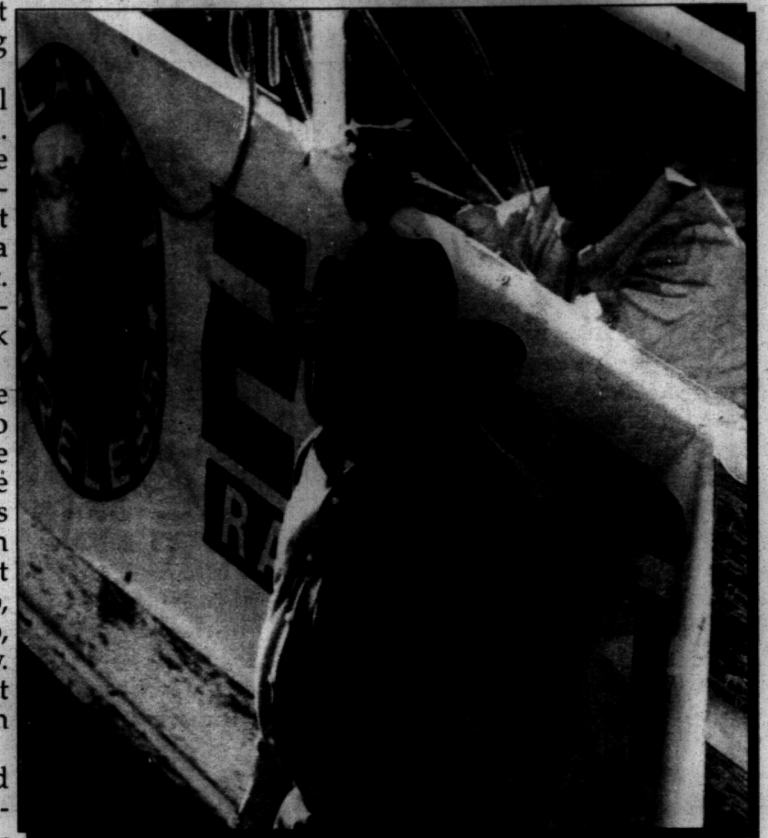
"I told him I'd put on a rodeo," Infanzon said. With years of rodeos under his belt, it was a natural for the cowboy preacher.

After his idea was approved, Infanzon began to plan the event, which was sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.

Once word of a new rodeo got out, regular rodeo advertisers like Coors Beer, Copenhagen Tobacco, and Jack Daniels liquor approached Infanzon to become sponsors, but he turned them all down, knowing the Lord would provide.

And provide he did: The Strategic Focus Cities funding offset revenue that would have come from the unwelcome sponsors.

Infanzon has a fierce love for cowboys



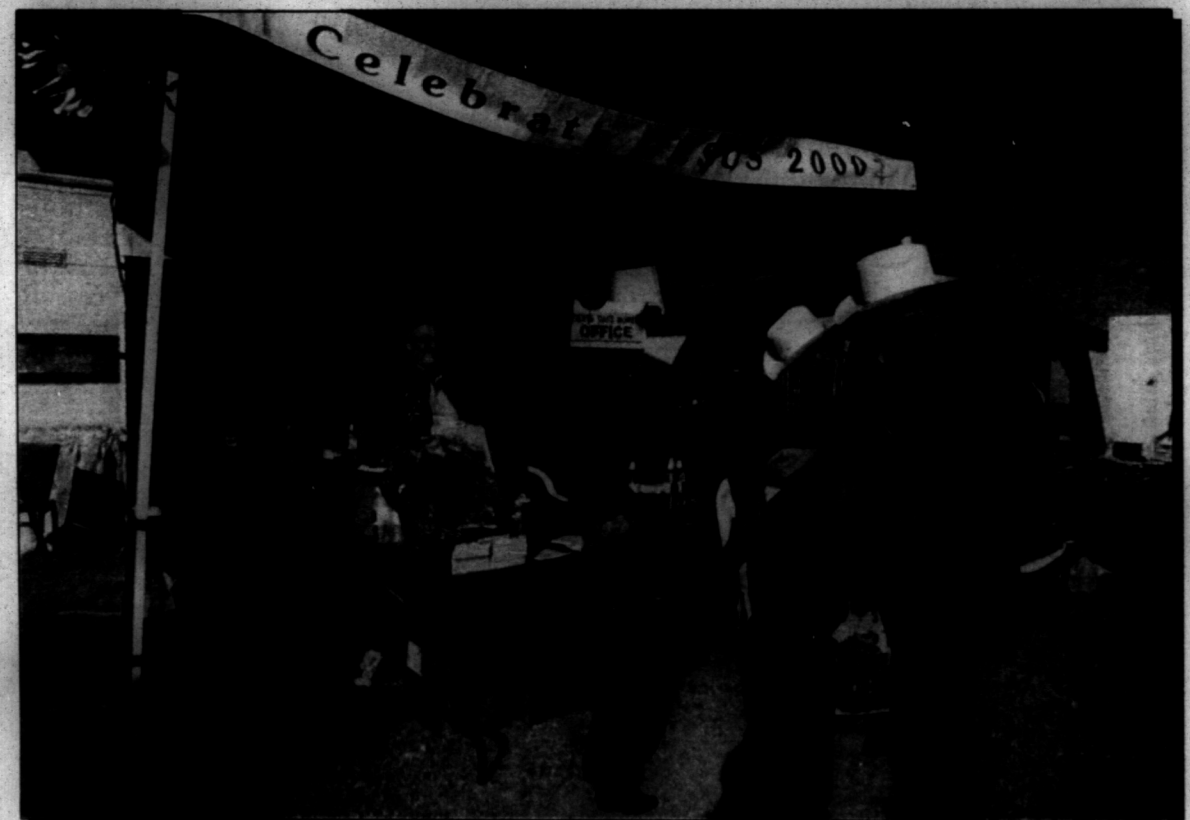
PASTOR/COWBOY — Michael Infanzon (left), pastor of Spur Cross Cowboy Church in Cave Creek, Ariz., was the organizer of the Nov. 10-12 Champion of Champions Rodeo. (BP photo)

Ted and Linda Wiese brought their unusual ministry called the "Cowboy Bistro" to the rodeo. Led by the Lord to a ministry of hospitality, the Wieses have traveled to 13 rodeos this year, preparing food to make sure cowboys eat nutritiously, for free. They hope to minister at 20 rodeos next year.

The Wieses make their home in Likely, Calif., and travel with a converted horse trailer containing a professional kitchen and the couple's living quarters. Next to the couple's trailer, banners proclaiming God's love and salvation in Jesus hang from the canopies that shade tables from the bright sun.

A former rice farmer, Ted said, "We're still planting seed, just different seeds."

Infanzon began his career in rodeo at the age of 6. He continued in the sport through high school and college and competed professionally until retiring three years ago.



EVANGELISTIC MATERIALS — Volunteers distributed Bibles, tracts, and other evangelistic materials during the Champion of Champions Rodeo in Cave Creek, Ariz., northeast of Phoenix. (BP photo)



HOLD ON! — A participant in the Champion of Champions Rodeo rides a bull as rodeo clowns look on. The Nov. 10-12 rodeo was sponsored by the Celebrate Jesus 2000/Strategic Focus Cities effort in Phoenix as an evangelistic event. (BP photo)

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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UEQ HLR DOLTCQOYP  
PLTM PLO GTPO PLUP AY  
AE PLR DITPLOI'Y ORO,  
DMP WOIVAOZOYP ETP  
PLO DOUG PLUP AY AE  
PLAEO THE ORO?

CMBO YAJ: NTIPR-TEO

Clue: D = B

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Eleven: Twenty-Five.